

A Vote for Gun Control is a Vote for Thunderdome⁴³

By Marko Kloos

Every martial art that involves direct unarmed hand-to-hand fighting has weight classes. This is done because a bantamweight boxer will get his clock cleaned by a heavyweight 99 out of 100 times. Sending a 115-pound fighter up against a 220-pound fighter is simply not an even contest, because the heavyweight can deal (and absorb) much more powerful punches.

Let me repeat that little factoid: *even a trained fighter in prime shape has no realistic chance of winning an unarmed fight against a heavier opponent.*

Now, would you consider it fair if we took the bantamweight out of the ring, and replaced him with a 60-year-old grandmother with diabetes? How about a 110-pound college student who's never punched anything or anyone in her life? Or maybe a 50-year-old, near-sighted convenience store clerk? A 28-year-old bank teller who's eight months pregnant? Would those opponents be a more even match for our heavyweight? Would you consider any of those pairings a fair fight?

Well, if you think that law-abiding citizens shouldn't be allowed to carry guns for self-defense, you're essentially in favor of pushing all those folks into that ring with the heavyweight, because that's the power balance on the street. There are no weight classes, no referees, and no fair fights.

Even if you imagine for just a moment that we could make all the guns magically disappear with the stroke of a legislative pen, you'd still have violent criminals out there, and they usually prepare the ring in their favor ahead of time. They have no interest in fair fights, and they don't pick their marks with an eye on keeping within the proper weight class. They pick the time, they pick the place, and they pick the victim...who gets shoved into that ring at a moment's notice. One second you're walking into the Stop-N-Rob to pay for your gas and grab some beef jerky, the next you're in the middle of a fight for your life, with no referee around to call the low blows.

The truth is that criminals who make a living threatening injury or death for the contents of a cash register or a wallet won't be greatly handicapped by any laws that prohibit the carrying of guns. They carry them anyway, but as I've pointed out, they'd still tilt the odds in their favor even if the magic gun control fairy could make all the guns go *poof* overnight. Gun control is tossing their intended victims into the ring with them after forcibly disarming them...to make sure *the violence doesn't escalate.*

Now, you let Grandma carry that .38 in her purse, and all of a sudden it's no longer an automatic loss for her, even if you don't handicap the heavyweight. Whatever he can come up with, up to and including producing his own gun, the odds are roughly even at that point. With that 16-ounce piece of alloy and steel in her hand, Grandma can suddenly negate the huge disparities in physical ability and fighting skill.

(On a side note regarding the sufficiency of being able to summon a cop via phone instead: take that gun from Grandma, and put a cell phone in her hand. Does the fight become any more fair? Does Grandma stand a better chance of walking away unharmed now? Or do you think that heavyweight can punch Grandma halfway into the next zip code before she has finished dialing 9-1-1?)

Some gun-control fans will say that everyone going armed will mean that the criminals will just pack bigger guns and shoot first every time, but



they're missing the point. When you know your potential marks aren't allowed to pack heat, you have a low-risk work environment. You can pick the weakest-looking victim, and set all the parameters for the impending confrontation the way you want them. When people aren't prevented from carrying weapons, you never know which one of them

has the means to even out the odds, and every mugging or convenience store register grab becomes a potential lethal confrontation or murder conviction. It makes the job of the violent criminal a much riskier vocation, and serves to discourage rather than encourage the use of physical force.

Another school of thought (if you can grace it with that label) states that Grandma always has the option to just turn over the contents of her purse, give the opponent what he wants, and hopefully be allowed to leave that ring without any violence taking place. Disregarding the fact that violence has already occurred (the implied threat of death or injury), just look at that course of action from a behavioral standpoint. If you make an illegal activity low-risk and high-reward, and you guarantee that the attacker gets what he wants every time he mugs someone, do you think you'll get a.) *less*, or b.) *much more* of that illegal activity?

Disarming the law-abiding doesn't do a thing to control the lawless. It's the legal and moral equivalent of grabbing some random person off the street, taking away anything that could be used as an effective weapon, tossing them into the ring with a trained heavyweight boxer who has had days and weeks to prepare for the fight, and telling the surprised and unwilling opponent to "fight fair." **B**